

Bighorn Sheep
SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT STATEMENT
AND
RECORD OF DECISION



Payette National Forest
July 2010

Appeal Direction



- Regional Forester conduct bighorn sheep viability analysis in the Payette NF
- Ensure habitat is available for a viable population of bighorn sheep
- Support determination of compliance with Hells Canyon NRA Act, 36 CFR 219.19, 36 CFR 292.48
- Amend Forest Plan to add direction that insures bighorn sheep viability

Analysis Foundation for Assessing Viability



- Bighorn Sheep Habitat
 - Do we have it? How much do we have? Is it well distributed across the landscape? Is it connected?
- Bighorn Sheep Landscape Use
 - Where are they? How far do they foray? Are herd inter-connected?
- Domestic Sheep Allotment Use
 - Where are the allotments? When are they on the allotments? Where do they trail?

Decision Objectives



- Provide adequate habitat to support viable Bighorn Sheep populations
- Comply with regulations implementing NFMA, HCNRA, and MUSYA
- Honor tribal rights and interests
- Avoid or minimize impacts to bighorn sheep which are identified as a sensitive species

Decision Objectives continued



- Maintain domestic sheep and goat grazing where the risk of contact can be avoided
- Eliminate overlap of domestic sheep and goat grazing with bighorn core herd home ranges
- Implement monitoring measures and forest plan direction
- Provide resources to implement the decision that are reasonable in the long term

Decision



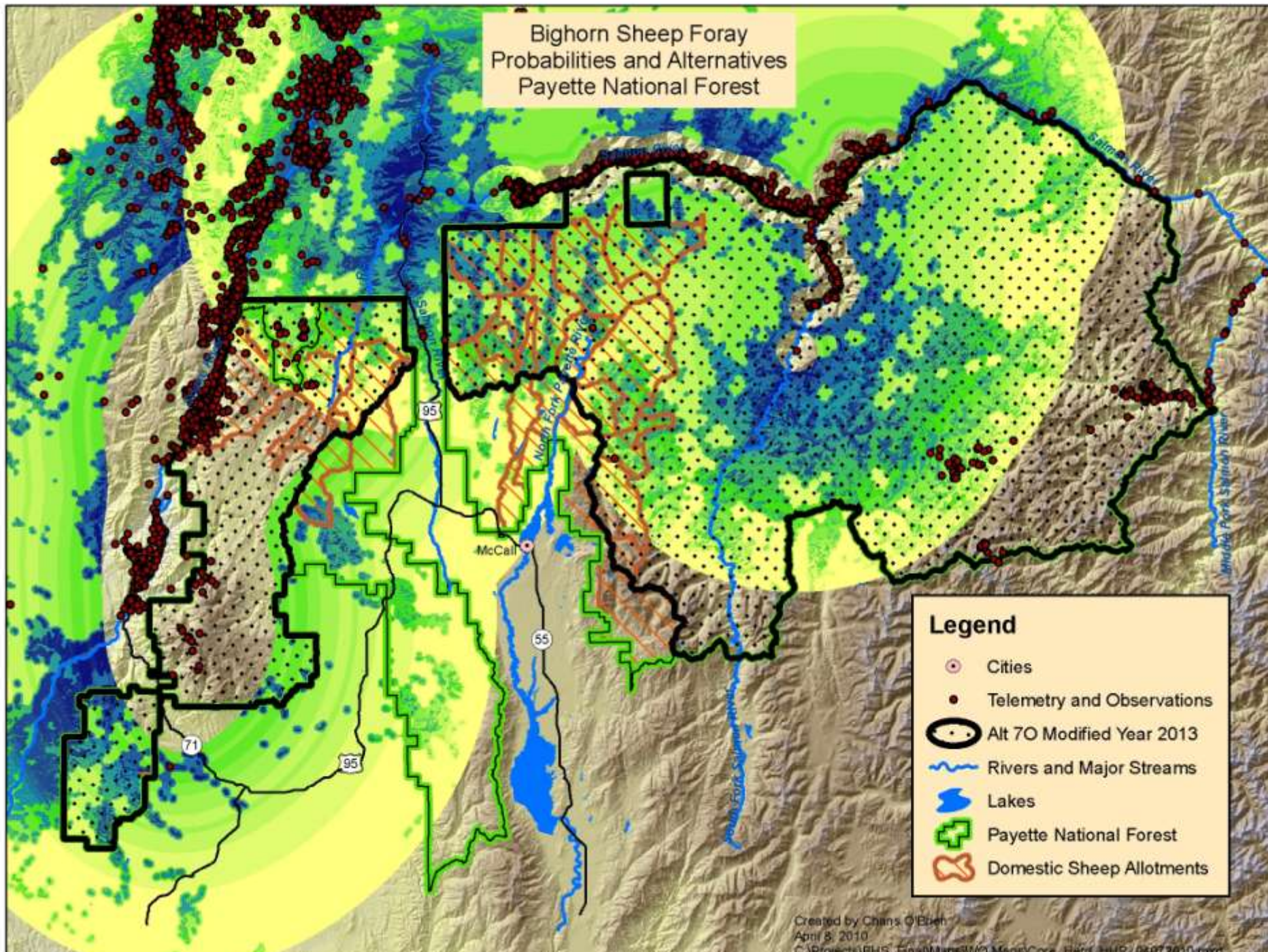
- Alternative 7O with implementation modifications (7O modified) was selected
- The amended forest plan, monitoring, and closure of Shorts Bar allotment effective 30 days after the decision

Decision continued



- 7O modified
 - Continue grazing as authorized in 2010
 - Implement management as described in 7P in 2011 and 7N in 2012
 - Implement management as described in 7O in 2013

Bighorn Sheep Foray
Probabilities and Alternatives
Payette National Forest



Legend

- Cities
- Telemetry and Observations
- Alt 70 Modified Year 2013
- Rivers and Major Streams
- Lakes
- Payette National Forest
- Domestic Sheep Allotments

Alternative 7O Modified



- Provides the appropriate risk level for the long term management for domestic sheep and goat grazing while providing adequate habitat for bighorn sheep populations
- As a sensitive species individuals or habitat may be impacted but will not likely contribute to a Federal listing or loss of viability for the species

Rationale



- Preponderance of scientific literature supports the potential for disease transmission
- There is a degree of scientific uncertainty concerning the risk; opposing arguments were considered
- Majority of literature and scientists supports keeping the species separate

Rationale continued



- Used a rich dataset and actual data in the analysis and models; limited the number of assumptions
- Cumulative effects were considered and do increase the risk of contact
- Forest Service is responsible to provide habitat that support viable populations of bighorn sheep

Analysis of Effects



- 94% of bighorn sheep summer habitat is protected (347,000 ac added)
- 31% rangeland suited for domestic sheep and goat grazing (68,000 ac reduced)
- Employment and income for sheep grazing will be less than current levels (up to 28 regional jobs lost)
- Employment and income for recreation and hunting based economies will remain stable or increase
- Tribal sustenance and traditional uses maintained or increased

Decision Space



- Alternatives 7P, 7N, 7O, & 7E all provide for viability and honor tribal rights and interests
- These alternatives comply with the HCNRA Act
- No grazing within core herd home range (CHHR)
- Alternatives 7P, 7N, & 7O provide for domestic sheep grazing where the risk of contact can be avoided with monitoring and forest plan direction
- Cost of monitoring alternative 7P & 7N is prohibitive in the long term given current resources

Decision Space



- Mean disease outbreak intervals Alt 7O: 46 to 230 years, Alt 7N: 31 to 150 years, Alt 7P: 19 to 94 years
- Alternatives 7P & 7N provides habitat to support viability in the short term
- Alternatives 7O & 7E provides habitat for expansion of the species
- Alternatives 7O & 7E reduces the risk of contact below 5% for the two herds adjacent to the Payette
- Alternative 7O provides for acceptable separation from the CHHR

Forest Plan Direction



- Maintain Separation
- Monitor for Bighorn Sheep Presence
- Adapt if an Effective Vaccine is Developed
- Implement emergency Actions if Bighorn Sheep are Detected near Domestic Sheep
- Graze Domestic Sheep Only if Separation can be Maintained
- Domestic Sheep Grazing is Permitted if Bighorn Sheep Monitoring is Conducted

Timeline



- Record of decision signed July 20, 2010
- Posted in the Federal Register on July 30, 2010
- 45 day appeal period (ends September 13, 2010)
- Implement 30 days post decision